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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/726,454	12/01/2000	Hiroshi Hattori	107850	2022

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EXAMINER

BRINICH, STEPHEN M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2624

DATE MAILED: 07/15/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/726,454

Applicant(s)

HATTORI, HIROSHI

Examiner

Stephen M Brinich

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,6,9-12,16 and 19-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-5,7,8,13-15,17 and 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

1. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

2. Claims 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claims 21-24 do not recite a statutory product or process. Examiner suggests the recitation of a statutory product (e.g. "a computer readable medium containing [description of program]").

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-2, 6, 9, 11-12, 16, & 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Fuji et al.

Re claims 1-2, 5-6, 9, 11-12, 15-16, & 19, Fuji et al discloses (Figure 1) an image forming method in which a set of orderly tiled halftone matrix patterns, offset from each other to form tiles in a larger matrix, are filled consecutively (i.e.

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pixels are filled in the order of the threshold amounts in the matrices) to create a desired shade.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 10 & 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fuji et al in view of Applicant's admitted Prior Art.

Re claims 10 & 20, Fuji et al does not describe the use of the described matrix for both color and monotone images, but rather describes a "gray level" image. The use of a "gray level" for both color (presumably meaning the level of each of the colors used in a given separation) and monochrome images is admitted to be known Prior Art by Applicant (page 1, lines 18-19). The use of the Fuji et al halftoning arrangement for both color and monochrome images as described by Applicant in order to render an image of either type would be an expedient obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

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Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 3-5, 7-8, 13-15, & 17-18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

8. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Re claims 3-4 & 13-14, the art of record does not teach or suggest the recited arrangement a shade levels at the end of a row of a first pattern and a next higher shade level in a second pattern.

Re claims 5, 7-8, 15, & 17-18, the art of record does not teach or suggest the recited row arrangement of sequential shade levels.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Chang et al and Li et al disclose additional examples of halftone matrix array tiling.

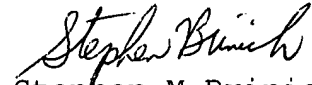
10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen M. Brinich at 703-305-4390. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays 7:00-4:30, alternate Fridays off.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Tech Center 2600 Customer Service center at 703-306-0377.

If attempts to contact the examiner and the Customer Service Center are unsuccessful, supervisor David Moore can be contacted at 703-308-7452.

Faxes pertaining to this application should be directed to the Tech Center 2600 official fax number, which is 703-872-9306.


Stephen M Brinich
Examiner
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smb
July 12, 2004